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## Eggs with a Soapy Taste

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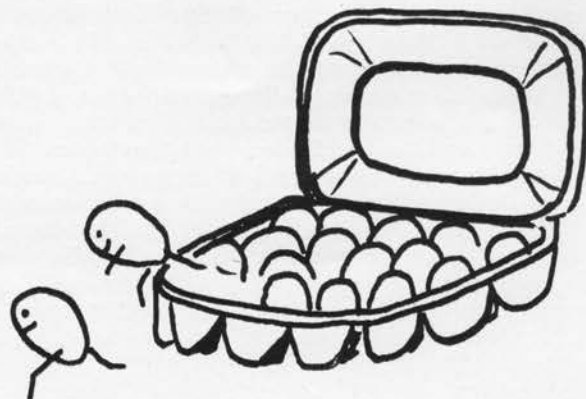
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# EGGS

with a

## Soapy Taste

by *Miriam Newbouse*  
*Education Junior*



EATING plain scrambled eggs, unsalted, unbuttered, every morning at 10 o'clock for two months may sound to you like a guaranteed way to end your appetite for eggs. On the contrary Dr. Richard H. Forsythe, Food Technologist in the Department of Poultry Husbandry at Iowa State College, finds that his "Egg-Tasting Panel" has developed more of a liking for eggs. One girl who never cared for eggs before learned to enjoy them, insisting that it was the first time she had ever tasted them not coated with grease.

The purpose of the experiments was to determine the extent of absorption of "soapy" materials through the shell of an egg. Three brands of soap which you may designate as "A," "B" and "C" were employed. These are commonly used by producers and pro-

cessors for washing eggs. Since 15 to 20 percent of the eggs you see on the market must be cleaned, the effect of the type of soap used for washing is of great concern to poultry product technologists.

A second series of tests were conducted at the same time to study the effect of cold storage on the washed eggs.

The taste panel was trained for a month previous to the tests in order to develop their ability to identify foreign flavors in eggs.

The eggs were cooked in a double boiler and served hot, as they are normally eaten, to help the tasters receive the fullest flavor. Five women participated: Helen Baum, Rachel Deal, Helen Heidel, Peg Ray and Estelle Turner.

They entered the Poultry Products Laboratory

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promptly at ten o'clock each morning and first tasted a "warm up" dish. It was scrambled egg in which the taster was not expected to find anything but a typical egg flavor. The purpose of this first test was to give the taster the "feel" of the product.

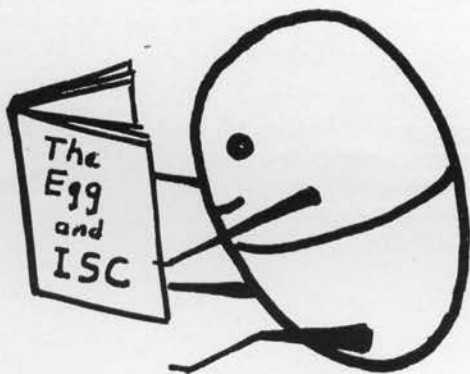
### *Triangular Tests*

Next each began her double series of "triangular tests." For test I she was given two control portions of egg containing no off-flavor. The third portion was prepared from eggs that had been washed.

For test II she was given two control portions of stored eggs and a third portion containing eggs which had been washed and held in storage.

First each person smelled a sample. (One of the soaps used is highly perfumed.) Then she placed a bit of food in her mouth. A small sip of lukewarm water helped to remove the flavor of the previous sample. Next she recorded her findings on a score card.

Dr. Forsythe explained that the results of this test may have important implications for further study. At present it should furnish helpful information for the processors who find washing eggs to be one of their major problems. Soap manufacturers will be interested in knowing results obtained with their soap products. For instance, makers of the highly perfumed soap, "A," may find it desirable to eliminate perfume from their product.



All soaps tested penetrated egg shells to some extent and only slight differences were observed between soaps. It made little difference whether eggs were held in the soap solution for 10 or 30 minutes.

It was emphasized that the practice of washing eggs should not be condemned, since this process removes approximately 95% of the bacteria on the shell surface.

Storing of eggs for two months eliminated much of the "soapy" taste, but resulted in development of definite storage flavor. It is possible that some of the soap diffuses out, but Dr. Forsythe believes it is more likely that the storage flavor makes the soaps flavor.

Results of this experiment show that eggs stored for 65 days under the extremely well-controlled conditions of commercial storage plants are still excellent food products. No results regarding storage in home refrigerators may be inferred.

Dr. Forsythe also cautioned that the average consumer may be unable to detect "soapy" flavors in eggs, since the members of the egg-tasting panel were trained to recognize specific flavors.

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